

4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ANALYSIS

Cumulative impacts are those effects to the environment “resulting from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable future actions” (32 CFR Part 651, 2002). Assessing cumulative impacts for an EA involves defining the scope of the other actions and their possible interrelationship with the proposed action if they overlap in space and time. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor, but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time. They are most likely to arise when a proposed action is related to other actions that could occur in the same location or at a similar time.

4.1 Scope of Cumulative Impacts Analysis

The scope of a cumulative impacts analysis involves both the geographic and temporal boundaries within which a proposed action and other actions could interact. The geographic boundary for this analysis includes the WAPTF property and the properties that border it. The latter group includes the Port, immediately adjacent areas of EAFB, AT&T Alascom property, the community of Government Hill, and the property to the southwest owned by Chevron. Actions not occurring in these areas are not analyzed herein. The temporal boundary for this analysis includes the present time, and extends into the foreseeable future. In the case of future actions, the geographic boundary governs whether or not they are considered herein. Table 5 lists the actions that meet the above criteria for analysis, and which are included for analysis.

TABLE 5
ACTIONS INCLUDED IN CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ANALYSIS

Action	Agency	Timing	Description
Knik Arm Crossing	KABATA ¹	EIS underway; design and construction proposed for 2006-2010	Construct a bridge across Knik Arm connecting the Municipality of Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough
Port Intermodal Expansion	Port and MARAD ²	Currently underway; scheduled for completion in 2011	Expansion and operation of Port to accommodate additional ships and services such as cruise lines

¹KABATA: Knik Arm Bridge and Toll Authority

²MARAD: United States Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration

KABATA, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, is currently finalizing a Draft EIS for the Knik Arm Crossing project. It is intended that the NEPA environmental analysis of the project will continue through 2006, with final design and construction scheduled for 2006 through 2010. The Knik Arm Crossing project seeks to further the development of transportation systems in the Upper Cook Inlet region by providing improved vehicular access and surface transportation connectivity between the MOA and the Matanuska-Susitna Borough, at the Port MacKenzie District, with a financially feasible and efficient crossing of Knik Arm (KABATA, 2005b). The project would interact with the Proposed Action in the following way.

There are two approach road alternatives being analyzed in the EIS, either of which would connect the Knik Arm Bridge with downtown Anchorage. Both alternatives (the Erickson Street Alignment and the Degan Street Alignment) would traverse across the eastern half of the WAPTF property. A map of these alternatives may be viewed in Appendix A. These alternatives, as well as the entire Knik Arm Crossing project, are not yet funded for construction, and so are still in the conceptual phase. If the project moved forward to construction, however, cumulative impacts with the Proposed Action could result.

The intermodal expansion of the Port is an ongoing effort that is progressing in phases. The Road and Rail Extension Project, mentioned elsewhere in this document and described in its own EA (ICRC, 2004), was completed in 2005. Its completion excludes it from the temporal window for cumulative impacts analysis established above. Another phase of the intermodal expansion that deserves analysis is the Marine Terminal Redevelopment (MTR) Project. It began in 2005, and will continue with phased expansions occurring through 2011. The MTR includes numerous activities to enhance the transportation of goods and services within the State of Alaska, and will expand, reorganize, and improve the Port. The project will add 135 acres of land, doubling the size of the Port, and will provide approximately 8,880 linear feet of waterfront structures west, northwest and southwest of the existing Port (ICRC, 2005). The MTR at the Port would interact with the Proposed Action in the following way. The existing Port administrative offices and related facilities will likely be relocated as part of the project. While the final relocation site has not been decided, one possibility is that they may be relocated to the WAPTF property. This concept has not yet been approved, and is not considered reasonably foreseeable for direct analysis in this EA. It is appropriate, however, to explore the cumulative impacts such an action might have when considered with the Proposed Action.

4.2 Assessment of Cumulative Impacts

Knik Arm Crossing Project

The Knik Arm Crossing is a project far broader in scope, and far more noteworthy in terms of the potential significance of its impacts, than the Proposed Action. The project is still in its preliminary planning phase, and the Draft EIS is not yet available for public review. Therefore the potential impacts of the Knik Arm Crossing are not yet known, and their interaction with the Proposed Action can not be analyzed in detail. However, based on the preliminary concept set forth on KABATA's website and in their scoping response for this EA, it is likely that if the project were constructed it would ultimately traverse the WAPTF property. Therefore the Port and KABATA would collaborate on the development plans the Port has for the WAPTF property, to avoid conflicts with the locations of the Port administrative building and its related facilities. Considered together, the WAPTF property transfer and the Knik Arm Crossing would not create any new impacts to resources. The negligible impacts from the Proposed Action, described in this EA, would not be caused to increase in type or in intensity because of the construction of the Knik Arm Crossing. The impacts that may occur if the Crossing is constructed would not be altered in context or intensity by the presence of the Port on the WAPTF property. Therefore the Proposed Action and the Knik Arm Crossing would not cumulatively create any significant impacts.

Marine Terminal Redevelopment Project

Consideration of the MTR Project is warranted in this analysis, as it involves a common plan of development on the Port, which is adjacent to the WAPTF property. Expansion under the MTR includes the demolition and relocation of existing Port administrative offices. It has not yet been determined where the offices would be relocated to, but the middle portion (SDA) of the WAPTF property has been discussed as a possible option. Another conceptual idea for the WAPTF property includes possibly creating an area for the staging and storage of military equipment. These ideas are being considered as part of the Port's ongoing intermodal expansion, of which the MTR is a large part. However, the conceptual ideas for the WAPTF property are not part of the MTR, and if they occur, they would be carried out with separate, non-federal funding.

Based on the EA completed for the MTR, there will be environmental impacts resulting from the project in the following areas.

- Air Quality
- Noise and Vibration
- Geology and Soils
- Hydrodynamics and Sedimentation
- Water Quality
- Biological Resources
- Essential Fish Habitat
- Transportation / Traffic

None of these impacts, however, were determined to be significant (ICRC, 2005), and many are temporary and result from construction. There were also positive environmental impacts identified in the EA for the MTR project.

Impacts resulting from the Proposed Action, as analyzed in this EA (Section 3.0), are all negligible. The temporary construction impacts in the areas of air quality and noise (Sections 3.4.6 and 3.4.7) would be spatially separated from the construction occurring for the MTR. The impacts for the Proposed Action are of a much briefer duration than the construction and operational impacts of the MTR.

Considered together, the MTR and the Proposed Action of transferring the WAPTF property from the Army to the Port would not result in any new impacts. The existing impacts from the MTR, as described in the associated EA, would not increase in intensity or change in context as a result of the Proposed Action. Since the ideas set forth for potential uses of the WAPTF property are entirely conceptual in nature and are not directly part of the MTR Project, the Proposed Action and the MTR would not cumulatively create significant impacts.